

Aernout Mik

PORI ART MUSEUM 5.2.-30.3.2003

The Dutch sculptor and video artist Aernout Mik is one of the most important figures in the field of contemporary video art. Mik's video installations are studies on the dynamics of social situations, behavioral patterns and different layers of reality. The exhibition at the Pori Art Museum includes four of Mik's extensive video installations: Reversal Room (2001) and Middlemen (2001) with his most recent works Flock (2002) and Park (2002).

Aernout Mik's video installations consist of constructed viewing spaces, which transform the outlines and relations of the existing exhibition space. Architectural structures play an important role in Mik's works, making them sculptural and physical elements. The situations of everyday life, suddenly reaching absurd proportions through unexpected events and people's irrational behavior, form a basis for his videos. There are often a number of people in Mik's works exposed to external manipulations and events without actively reacting to them. The tension of these video installations doesn't build just internally between the characters and their surroundings. The installations bring together the fictional space of the video and the real, physical space of the beholder thus creating a tension in the reality of the directly lived architectural space, too.

Although Aernout Mik works with the video, a medium bound to linear time, in his works the linear narrative structure is abolished. The carefully staged events in his videos have no narrative plot but seem to recur unaltered, endlessly. There is a definitive pattern to the events, but no beginning, middle or an end. The unrealized hope of any kind of progression in the events creates feelings of frustration and restlessness. The movement of the camera doesn't focus on any specific element or person capable of explaining the events or connecting the individual parts of the video together. By deconstructing and removing narrative elements Mik turns the attention to the beholder and his/hers physical and psychological situation.

Aernout Mik was born in 1962 in Groningen, The Netherlands. He lives and works in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Mik has participated in several international exhibitions including Venice Biennial (1997, 2000), Powerplant, Toronto (2001), ICA, London (2000), Van Abbemuseum (2000). Flock is produced in cooperation with Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona; F.R.A.C., Reims; Pori Art Museum, Pori; courtesy of The Project, N.Y.; Galeria Massimo de Carlo, Milano; carlier | gebauer, Berlin.

On the occasion of the exhibition visual artist, researcher Kari Yli-Annala lectures on new video art. The lecture takes place in the lecture room of Pori Art Museum on 12.2. at 18.30.

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